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	VCE-00	M-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-02	SSO-00	SS-00
	EPAE-00	DSCC-00	DRL-02	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/005W	
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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0647
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY ABUJA PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 HARARE 000044

SIPDIS

AF FOR A/S KANSTEINER, P/DAS BELLAMY AND AF/S
NSC FOR SR DIR FRAZIER
LONDON FOR GURNEY
PARIS FOR NEARY

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/03/2012

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: LIKELY SCENARIOS; POLICY TOOLS AND TIMING

CLASSIFIED BY JOSEPH G. SULLIVAN FOR REASONS 1.5B/D

1.(C) SUMMARY: WITH THE ZIMBABWE DEMOCRACY ACT NOW IN PLACE, ZIMBABWE FIRMLY ON THE COMMONWEALTH'S CMAG AGENDA AND THE ELECTION DATE LIKELY TO BE ANNOUNCED BY JANUARY 10, WE ARE APPROACHING A KEY MOMENT IN THE LEAD-UP TO ZIMBABWEAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS. IT DOES NOT APPEAR THAT PRESIDENT MUGABE WILL BE DETERRED BY PRESSURES FROM THE US, THE EU, THE COMMONWEALTH OR SADC FROM HIS DETERMINATION TO WIN THE ELECTION BY WHATEVER MEANS NECESSARY. IT IS INCREASINGLY UNCERTAIN, HOWEVER, THAT ZANU-PF VIOLENCE AND INTIMIDATION, ELECTORAL MANIPULATION AND POPULIST USE OF THE LAND ISSUE WILL DELIVER A MUGABE'S VICTORY IN THE FACE OF A DISASTROUS ECONOMIC SITUATION AND GROWING FOOD SHORTAGES. MOREOVER, AS LONGTIME ZANU-PF STRONGMAN EDDISON ZVOBGO TOLD US, IT IS NOT LIKELY THAT ZIMBABWEANS CAN BE BEATEN INTO VOTING FOR MUGABE WHEN THEY NOW HAVE ANOTHER VIABLE ALTERNATIVE.

2.(C) GIVEN THIS NEXUS OF DEVELOPMENTS, IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT WE BEGIN TO EXAMINE VARIOUS SCENARIOS IN THE PRE- AND POST-ELECTION PERIODS AND PREPARE POLICY TOOLS CALIBRATED FOR THE APPROPRIATE MOMENTS. END SUMMARY

13. (C) CURRENT SCENARIO AND POLICY INSTRUMENTS

(A) THE GOZ: NOTWITHSTANDING DOUBTS AMONG SOME SENIOR ZANU-PF FIGURES AND QUESTIONS ABOUT HIS OWN HEALTH, PRESIDENT MUGABE SEEMS DETERMINED TO COMPETE FOR AND TO
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WIN THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. HE WILL UTILIZE VIOLENCE, INTIMIDATION AND ELECTORAL MANUEVERS DESIGNED TO REDUCE THE VOTE FOR THE OPPOSITION. ZANU-PF, NONETHELESS, WANTS THE DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL LEGITIMACY WHICH NORMALLY STEMS FROM AN ELECTION AND IS PLANNING TO MAINTAIN THE APPEARANCES OF A CREDIBLE PROCESS, INCLUDING LIMITED INTERNATIONAL OBSERVATION AND ELECTION DAY OR WEEK NORMALITY.

(B) MDC AND CIVIL SOCIETY: UNDER CURRENT CONDITIONS, THE OPPOSITION MDC DEFINITELY INTENDS TO STAY IN THE RACE AND THINKS IT CAN WIN DESPITE THE OBSTACLES. MOST CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS ARE ALSO COMMITTED TO REMAINING FULLY ENGAGED IN THE LEGAL, ORGANIZATIONAL AND PUBLIC EDUCATION FIGHTS TO MAKE THE ELECTION AS FAIR AS POSSIBLE.(IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT LEGAL APPEALS TO EXTEND VOTER REGISTRATION PERIOD AND TO FORCE THE REGISTRAR TO TURN OVER REGISTRATION LISTS HAVE BEEN WON AND MORE LEGAL CHALLENGES TO THE AMENDED CITIZENSHIP LAW AND OTHER POTENTIAL ELECTION MANUEVERS ARE PLANNED.)

(C) INTERNATIONAL ROLE: THE US AND MANY EUROPEANS ARE PROVIDING CRITICAL SUPPORT TO CIVIL SOCIETY AND OTHER

INDEPENDENT ZIMBABWEAN FORCES, INCLUDING LABOR, THE
INDEPENDENT MEDIA AND HUMAN RIGHTS AND ELECTION WATCHDOG
GROUPS. THE GOZ IS UNLIKELY TO PERMIT EU OR US
OBSERVERS, BUT COMMONWEALTH AND SADC-PF OBSERVERS COULD
STILL PLAY A USEFUL ROLE IF THEY CAN GET ON THE GROUND
AT LEAST THREE-TO-FOUR WEEKS PRIOR TO ELECTIONS. APART
FROM SOUTH AFRICA AND THE SADC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM, IT
APPEARS UNLIKELY THAT SADC AS AN INSTITUTION, NIGERIA OR
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THE AU WILL PLAY A HELPFUL ROLE IN PRESSING FOR FREER
ELECTIONS.

(D) POLICY INSTRUMENTS: IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE MAINTAIN
THE PRESSURE SO THAT ELECTION CONDITIONS NOT DETERIORATE
FURTHER, BUT WE SHOULD NOT EXPECT THE GOZ TO ALTER ITS
COURSE AS A RESULT OF ANY ADDITIONAL PRESSURES WE CAN
REALISTICALLY BRING TO BEAR. JUST AS IMPORTANTLY, THE
US, OTHER INTERNATIONAL ACTORS, AND ZIMBABWEAN CIVIL
SOCIETY MUST DO NOTHING TO UNDERMINE THE PROSPECTS OF
THE MDC FOR WINNING DESPITE THE OBSTACLES PLACED IN ITS
WAY. FOR INSTANCE, ANY PRELIMINARY JUDGMENT WE RENDER
ON ELECTION CONDITIONS SHOULD NOT PROVIDE GROUNDS FOR
THE GOZ TO SHUT DOWN THE ELECTION PROCESS. SIMILARLY,
WE NEED TO AVOID ANY MEASURES WHICH COULD GIVE THE GOZ
BASIS TO SHUT DOWN OUR SUPPORT FOR CSO'S, INCLUDING
VISAS FOR TRAINERS, EXPERTS AND EMBASSY STAFF. WE WILL
WISH TO COORDINATE CLOSELY WITH THE COMMONWEALTH, SOUTH
AFRICA AND THE EU SO THAT WE ACT AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE IN
HARMONY. WE NEED TO ENGAGE WITH SADC AND NIGERIA TO
PREVENT THEM FROM UNDERMINING INTERNATIONAL PRESSURES ON

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INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY
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THE GOZ TO REDUCE VIOLENCE AND TO ORGANIZE A MINIMALLY
CREDIBLE ELECTION.

4.(C) SCENARIO FOR SHARP DETERIORATION AND POLICY
RESPONSES

(A) GOZ: IT IS NOT LIKELY, BUT POSSIBLE THAT THE CURRENT
SITUATION COULD DETERIORATE SHARPLY PRIOR TO ELECTIONS,
MOST LIKELY IF THE GOVERNMENT WERE TO CONCLUDE THAT IT
STOOD TO LOSE, OR IF LOOMING FOOD SHORTAGES WERE TO
PRODUCE PUBLIC DISTURBANCES. THE GOVERNMENT COULD
IMPOSE A STATE OF EMERGENCY, ALTHOUGH, EVEN THEN, THERE
IS NO CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISION FOR PRESIDENT MUGABE
REMAINING IN OFFICE BEYOND APRIL 1. THE GOZ COULD ALSO
SHUT DOWN THE OPPOSITION MDC OR ARREST ITS LEADERSHIP ON
THE PRETENSE OF ITS ALLEGED INVOLVEMENT IN TERRORIST
ACTIVITIES OR EVEN COMMISSION OFF-LINE ASSASSINATION OF
OPPOSITION LEADERS. IN THE COURSE OF THE ELECTION
COUNT, THE ZANU GOVERNMENT COULD REACT TO AN APPARENT
OPPOSITION VICTORY BY INTERRUPTING OR SHUTTING DOWN THE
PROCESS ON ONE OF A NUMBER OF PRETEXTS, NONE OF WHICH
WOULD BE CREDIBLE.

(B) OPPOSITION, CIVIL SOCIETY AND THE PUBLIC: OPPOSITION

AND CIVIL SOCIETY WOULD LIKELY BE FORCED UNDERGROUND UNDER THESE SCENARIOS. PENT-UP PUBLIC FRUSTRATIONS WOULD LIKELY LEAD TO CIVIL DISTURBANCES. THE WILLINGNESS OF SECURITY FORCES TO PUT DOWN THESE DISTURBANCES VIOLENTLY WOULD BECOME THE KEY ISSUE.

(C) INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE: THE INTERNATIONAL
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COMMUNITY, INCLUDING THE EU, THE COMMONWEALTH AND THE US WOULD NEED TO RESPOND RAPIDLY AND HARSHLY TO SUCH A SCENARIO WITH THE CLEAR MESSAGE THAT SUCH A DEVELOPMENT CANNOT STAND. IF THE SITUATION REMAINED FLUID, WE WOULD WISH TO COMMUNICATE TO SECURITY OFFICIALS THE UNACCEPTABILITY OF AN UNCONSTITUTIONAL AND ILLEGAL REGIME AND ENCOURAGE THEIR COOPERATION IN A RETURN TO LEGALITY. IT WILL ALSO BE EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO HAVE SOLID AND STRONG RESPONSE FROM SOUTH AFRICA, SADC AND NIGERIA, AS WELL AS FROM UN SYG ANNAN AND THE UNSC. UNDER THIS SCENARIO, FULL AND PUNITIVE PERSONAL SANCTIONS SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED IMMEDIATELY AND SELECTED ECONOMIC AND DIPLOMATIC MEASURES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED.

5.(C) POST-ELECTION SCENARIOS

(A) MDC VICTORY: IN THE EVENT OF AN MDC VICTORY, THE MDC IS LIKELY TO WORK THROUGH EXISTING ZANU-PF AND SECURITY SERVICE CONTACTS TO SEEK TO ASSURE THAT TSVANGIRAI CAN TAKE OFFICE AND THAT HE WILL HAVE SUFFICIENT SUPPORT IN THE PARLIAMENT AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE TO GOVERN. MUGABE HARD-LINERS CAN BE EXPECTED TO ATTEMPT TO BLOCK THIS BY WHATEVER MEANS AT THEIR DISPOSAL. WE AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ACTORS WILL WANT TO SUPPORT TSVANGIRAI'S EFFORTS TO CONSOLIDATE HIS VICTORY AND TO ENCOURAGE ZANU-PF AND THE SECURITY FORCES TO ACCEPT THE OUTCOME. IN VIEW OF THE CURRENT ECONOMIC AND FOOD CRISIS, IT WILL BE CRITICALLY IMPORTANT TO PROVIDE RAPID HUMANITARIAN AND FAST-DISBURSING ECONOMIC SUPPORT TO THE NEW GOVERNMENT.

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(B) A MUGABE VICTORY IN A SERIOUSLY FLAWED ELECTION: A MUGABE VICTORY, WHICH WE BELIEVE IS ONLY POSSIBLE BY THE FLAGRANT USE OF VIOLENCE, INTIMIDATION AND ELECTORAL MANIPULATION, IS A FORMULA FOR PERMANENT TRANSITION CRISIS -- ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL. REGARDLESS OF LIKELY POLICY REVERSALS INTENDED TO APPEAL TO DOMESTIC INVESTORS AND INTERNATIONAL DONORS, THERE IS LIKELY TO BE NO REVERSAL OF ZIMBABWE'S DECLINE. UNDER THIS SCENARIO, WE SHOULD PROCEED TO IMPLEMENT THE PERSONAL TARGETTED SANCTIONS ENVISIONED IN ZDERA AGAINST A WIDE, BUT CAREFULLY SELECTED LIST OF REGIME LEADERS, INCLUDING THOSE WHO HAVE MANIPULATED THE A-2 LAND GRAB TO THEIR PERSONAL BENEFIT. WE SHOULD SEEK TO MAINTAIN A WORKING RELATIONSHIP HERE, PARTICULARLY FOR THE ABILITY IT GIVES US TO WORK WITH OTHER ZIMBABWEANS AND CONTINUE SOME PROGRAMS OF SUPPORT FOR THE ZIMBABWEAN PEOPLE, E.G. HIV/AIDS. WE AND OTHER INTERNATIONALS -- THE COMMONWEALTH, THE EU AND US -- SHOULD ALSO ASSURE ZIMBAWE'S EXCLUSION FROM AGOA, COUTONOU, IFI LARGESSE AND OTHER BENEFITS. ZIMBABWE AND THE ZANU-PF WILL REMAIN IN CONTINUING CRISIS IN THIS SCENARIO AND WE

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WOULD MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THE US WILL DO NOTHING TO HELP
ZIMBABWE EMERGE FROM THAT CRISIS UNTIL A NEW ROUND OF
CREDIBLE ELECTIONS IS HELD.

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